

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

A TRIBUTE TO CYNTHIA Y.  
CUMMINGS

**HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 26, 2009*

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Cynthia Cummings, Executive Director of Community Parents, Inc. and community activist.

Cynthia Cummings is the Executive Director of Community Parents, Inc. (CPI), a non-profit community based organization, serving 275 children and families in Bedford Stuyvesant and Far Rockaway. Additionally, she presides over the Administration for Children's Services Head Start Training Institute at Berean Baptist Church, offering professional, career and credential programs. Continuing accomplishments include securing and renovating a permanent facility in Far Rockaway.

Immediately following completion of her degree in Human Development and Family Studies at Cornell University in 1975, Ms. Cummings begun her career as the Teacher/Director of Moravian Head Start in Harlem, where she developed her administrative skills operating the program now known as Arthur and Thelma Adair Community Centers. She decided to pursue her studies further at New York University in Community Health Education as she worked at SUNY Health Science Center on the National Study on Sickle Cell Disease. Her interest and work in the health industry resulted in her being included in several research publications.

She maintained an important connection with her community as chairperson of Community Parents Head Start, while then employed at Empire Blue Cross and Blue Shield. In 1991, her predecessor passed the torch and Ms. Cummings relinquished the chair of CPI to assume the role of Executive Director. The program grew under her leadership, achieving the NAEYC accreditation and expanding its services into Far Rockaway, Queens. Concurrently, Ms. Cummings has spearheaded many partnerships to improve quality and to enhance services for Head Start children and families. CPI was selected as a promising practices site for the National Head Start Family Literacy Project and was featured in Newsweek Magazine. The organization was featured as one of 14 programs selected by the Administration for Children's Services New York City Head Start Best Practices sites. Most recently, in collaboration with Bank Street College, the agency was selected as an Emotionally Responsive Practices site for continued research on best practices.

Among her professional affiliations are, chairperson of DC 1707 Local 85 Head Start Employees Welfare Fund, representing the interests of approximately 3,000 members. She also is a trustee of The Head Start Management Welfare Fund. Additionally, she is an active member of the National, Regional and State Head Start Associations contributing to

the development of their respective annual training conferences. Locally, she is Board member of Brooklyn Kindergarten Society and remains active in the Cornell Black Alumni Association and involved in the Decatur-Stuyvesant Block Association. You often will see Cynthia greeting you at the door during the annual Brownstoner's of Bedford-Stuyvesant house tour.

Cynthia has testified before the General Health and Welfare Committee of the New York City Council and was a panelist for the Citizen's Committee on welfare reform. She has presented at The National Center for Family Literacy Conference and at the National Association for the Education of Young Children on the Importance of Family Literacy. As a Johnson and Johnson Management Fellow, she continues her study of organizational management annually at the Anderson School of Business at UCLA. She also continues her activism as a participant in the CORO Leadership NY program.

She is the recipient of Councilmember Annette Robinson's Spirited Leadership Award, was honored by the Mid-Bedford Heights Lions Club and Vanguard Independent Democratic Association and received a proclamation from Councilmember Albert Vann for her civic efforts. An avid horticulturist, one often will see her lovingly tending to her home gardens. Her creative, artistic expression further is nurtured through dance training and performing with Mo' Jazz, a blithe troupe of athletic and creative women over, let's say, forty.

Cynthia is married to her soul mate, Richard Cummings, a pianist and composer, and she remains blessed to have in her life, her mother, Ellen Lewis, who recently celebrated her 99th birthday. Representing the ascending generation are her two daughters, Diarra, a Columbia University graduate, following professional ballet and modern dance associations, and Imani a graduate of The University of Tampa, who now resides in sunny California currently pursuing a second career in acupuncture.

## TRANSPORTATION CONSTRUCTION UNDER THE RECOVERY ACT

**HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 26, 2009*

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to report that the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is getting construction workers off the bench and back on the job.

The Recovery Act provides \$64.1 billion for transportation and infrastructure investments within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. Nearly \$40 billion of those funds have been distributed to States by existing highway, transit, and clean water statutory formulas. Of the \$27 billion provided for highway infrastructure formula funds, in the past three weeks, 33 States have

submitted and received approval for nearly 800 projects totaling \$2.9 billion, more than 10 percent of the Recovery Act highway funds.

Construction is underway across the country: Silver Spring, Maryland: \$2.1 million project to resurface and improve safety along a 1.1-mile section of New Hampshire Avenue; Syracuse, Utah: \$15 million project to widen State Highway 108; and Richmond, Vermont: \$1.7 million project to rehabilitate a bridge over the Winooski River.

In addition, the Federal Transit Administration has awarded grants to the Kentucky, Missouri, and Maine State DOTs to purchase more than 500 vehicles, including trolleys, buses, vans, and ferries and construct almost 50 bus shelters.

Amtrak has approved \$938 million of capital improvement projects: including \$105 million project to replace a moveable bridge over the Niantic River; and \$82 million to rehabilitate 68 passenger cars.

The Federal Aviation Administration has identified \$913 million of the \$1.1 billion of airport projects, including runway, taxiway, apron, and terminal improvements.

All across America, the Recovery Act is creating good, family-wage jobs to restore our nation's infrastructure and economy.

## H.R. 1746, THE PRE-DISASTER MITIGATION ACT OF 2009

**HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 26, 2009*

Mr. OBERSTAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1746, the "Pre-Disaster Mitigation Act of 2009", a bill to reauthorize the Federal Emergency Management Agency's ("FEMA") Pre-Disaster Mitigation ("PDM") program, a program to help communities across the nation protect against natural disasters and other hazards. I thank Ranking Member MICA, and the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART), Chair and Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management, for joining me in sponsoring this bill.

The Pre-Disaster Mitigation program provides technical and financial assistance to state and local governments to reduce injuries, loss of life, and damage to property caused by natural hazards. Examples of mitigation activities include the seismic strengthening of buildings, acquiring repetitively flooded homes, installing shutters and shatter-resistant windows in hurricane-prone areas, and building "safe rooms" in houses and buildings to protect people from high winds.

Action on this bill today is crucial because, under current law, the Pre-Disaster Mitigation program will sunset on September 30, 2009. Therefore, Congress must take quick action to continue this vital program.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.